

A NEW SPECIES OF *LEPIDOCRYSOPS*  
FROM THE EASTERN CAPE, SOUTH AFRICA

No. 2

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*Lepidochrysops victori* spec. nov.

This *Lepidochrysops* combines the characteristics of *L. loewensteini* Swanepoel (1957) and *L. ketsi* Cottrell (1963), insofar as it resembles the former on the upperside, and the latter on the underside.

The butterfly's salient features will be described hereunder, and comparisons made with the aforementioned species.

**Male: Forewing and hindwing upperside.**

Ground-colour dark greyish-brown, similar to that of *L. loewensteini*, but slightly greyer in appearance. Like *loewensteini*, this insect also exhibits (in fresh specimens) a faint dusting of yellow at the base of the costa on the forewing. This species is readily distinguished from *L. ketsi* on the upperside by the following features:

- (a) The ground-colour of *L. ketsi* is a uniform medium grey; *L. victori* is a much darker greyish-brown.
- (b) *L. ketsi* never shows a faint dusting of yellow scales at the base of the forewing costa.
- (c) The wing-shape of *L. victori* is much more rounded on the distal margin and apex of the forewing than that of *L. ketsi*, being strongly reminiscent of *L. loewensteini* in this regard.
- (d) The cilia of *L. victori* are much less prominent than those of *L. ketsi*, and are not as distinctly chequered. In some cases, the cilia of *L. victori* are hardly invaded by any colour at all – a characteristic never shown by *L. ketsi*.
- (e) The distal spots on the hindwing are only very faintly apparent – unlike those in the majority of specimens of *L. ketsi*, where this series of spots are very pronounced. These distal spots are black, and are not edged outwardly with white, as is the case with males of *ketsi*.

It is interesting to note that most specimens of *loewensteini*, unlike both *victori* and *ketsi*, have pronounced yellow streaks bordering these distal spots inwardly.

**Forewing underside.**

Ground-colour greyish-brown, showing a greater degree of brown colouration than *L. ketsi*, which exhibits a flat grey ground-colour on the underside. Specimens did not, however, exhibit the extent of olive brown in the ground-colour of the wing as seen in *L. loewensteini*.

The median series of spots are joined together, as in both *loewensteini* and *ketsi*, and run the whole breadth of the wing from vein 10 to vein 1b. In comparison with *L. ketsi*, there is an extreme reduction in the white edging round each of these spots, as well as round the discoidal spot: This characteristic is also evident in *L. loewensteini*. However, the spots of this median series are much broader than those of *loewensteini*; and the spot in area 4 is frequently produced so far inward that it fuses with the discoidal spot – a

\*Huntly Glen, Bedford, 5780, South Africa.

characteristic never evident in specimens of *loewensteini*. Also, this median band is markedly more sinuous than in *loewensteini*.

#### Hindwing underside.

The foregoing concerning the ground-colour of the forewing underside is also applicable here. Generally, the hindwing markings of this insect are identical to those of *L. ketsi*, and reference may be made in this regard to the description of the latter insect. However, the series of sagittate white markings occurring postmedially are generally more heavily pronounced than those of *L. ketsi*.

#### Female: Forewing and hindwing upperside.

The base-colour of all these wings is a deep brown, as opposed to the dark greyish brown of the males. As is the case of most female *Lepidochrysops*, all four wings are more elongated than in the male. Like the male, the female of *L. victori* exhibits a faint dusting of yellow scales at the base of the forewing, when fresh. This is a characteristic not seen in females of *ketsi*.

Further, the females of *L. victori* are of a darker, richer brown ground-colour than those of *L. ketsi*.

As in *L. ketsi* and *L. loewensteini*, the base of all wings on the upperside is lighter in colour than the outer margin. However, there is no tendency in *L. victori* towards the dappled colouration seen in females of *ketsi*: instead, there is a gradual transition from lighter brown at the base of each wing, to darker brown towards the margin.

In this respect, the females are similar to those of *L. loewensteini*. They may, however, readily be distinguished from the females of *loewensteini* by their markedly lighter ground-colour.

What was said above concerning the cilia of the male applies equally to the cilia of the female.

As in the males, the distal spots on the hindwing upperside are much less pronounced than in females of *ketsi*, although (unlike those of the males) they are edged outwardly with white.

#### Female underside.

Since this is identical to that of the male, reference can here be made to the description of the male underside.

It must be noted that the plate featuring the insect in this description is not entirely satisfactory inasmuch as the golden sheen on the uppersides of the specimens concerned is overemphasised; the ground colour of both surfaces of the wings, too, is slightly greyer in appearance than is illustrated.

Comparison of the genitalia of the "Huntly Glen" *Lepidochrysops* with those of *Lep. ketsi* Cottrell (1965).

The *uncus lobes* are more produced than those of *ketsi*.

The *falces* are considerably broader in their downward, more basal section, and they lack the sudden, fine reduction in thickness just before the hooked extremity which occurs in those of *ketsi*; while the hook is slightly less well developed than in the latter taxon.

The *valves* can be very similar in each taxon – i.e., without the development of the "callus", of Cottrell; but in one example of *ketsi* there was a very well developed callus, and it is possible that a callus could occur in the case of some examples of the present species.

In the *dedeagus* the lateral plates, of Cottrell, retain their depth for a greater length before the dorsal dip, than in the case of *ketsi*, and there is some tendency for the distal portion after the dip, when viewed laterally, to be less shallow in the present taxon. The "lateral flanges", of Cottrell, at the basal

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end of the *aedeagus* are broader in the present taxon and without the rather pronounced "neck" of those of *ketsi*.

Comparison of the genitalia of the "Huntly Glen" *Lepidochrysops* with those of *Lep. loewensteini* Swanepoel (1951).

The *falces* are much wider in their first, more basal section, and the following curvature on the inner side is comparatively abrupt, against the smooth and much wider curvature in *loewensteini*. The following, upward portion of the *falces* is slightly less slender in the former than in the latter taxon. In the former the final curvature forming each hook occurs smoothly, but in *loewensteini* it is preceded by a slight irregularity, inwards and then outwards.

The *valves* do not seem to show any significant difference in either taxon. In both there is a limited degree of broadening some way before the hooked portion, in some examples; but no teal callus has so far been observed in either species.

In the *aedeagus*, the distal portion after the dorsal "dip" appears in the first species to be rather less shallow than in *loewensteini*, the lateral view. In the former, the lateral flanges at the basal end of the *aedeagus* are broader than in the other taxon.

This interesting *Lepidochrysops* was discovered by Mr. Victor Pringle in February 1973, flying at a high altitude on the foothills of the Great Winterberg. The insect was observed to fly in a fairly restricted area, where it appeared to be associated with a species of *Selago*, which is presumed to be the foodplant of this species. Subsequently two more colonies of this insect have been found along the same range of mountains, at approximately the same altitude.

When the species was originally collected, it was noted to occur in the same vicinity as a colony of *L. variabilis* Cottrell — specimens of *L. variabilis* were seen to congregate in typical fashion on the summit of the ridge, while the colonies of *L. victori* were noted to occur in restricted areas about the slopes of the same ridge. Unlike *variabilis*, *L. victori* was never seen to congregate on peaks.

The author notes that this difference in habits is an important differentiating feature between *variabilis* and *ketsi*, (see "A Study of the *methyma*-Group of the Genus *Lepidochrysops* Hedicke (Lepidoptera: Lycaenidae)" by C. B. Cottrell (*Mem. ent. Soc. S.A.*, No. 9:1-110, June 1965) and this led to speculation that this insect may indeed be a high altitude race of *L. ketsi*.

However, observation over a ten-year period revealed that, unlike *ketsi*, this insect never emerged in Spring or Mid-Summer; the earliest records of emergence being during mid-February. It remained a puzzle as to why this insect should restrict its flight period to February and March, whereas *Ketsi* had been noted to emerge in October, and has been recorded in all months until March.

Then, on the 27th November, 1979, a colony of insects, identical in all respects to specimens of *ketsi* recorded from Coega, Line Drift and Grahamstown, was discovered in a remote valley at the foot of the same ridge as that upon which *L. victori* flies. This colony was noted to be at its peak during November and December,

and to be over before the emergence of the first specimens of *L. victori*. Since this colony of insects is approximately only two kilometers distant from the nearest colony of *L. victori*, the author has no hesitation in allocating specific status to the latter insect.

It has given the author great pleasure to name this insect in honour of its discoverer, whose life-long interest in nature has contributed so much to present knowledge of the fauna and flora of the Winterberg region.

The author wishes to place on record his gratitude to Mr. C. G. C. Dickson for doing the genitalia preparations for this paper and for the other valuable assistance he has rendered.

HOLOTYPE: "Huntly Glen", Bedford, South Africa. February 1973 (V. L. Pringle).

ALLOTYPE: "Huntly Glen", Bedford, South Africa. February 1973 (V. L. Pringle).

PARATYPES: "Whytebank", Bedford, 1 ♀, 18/3/75 (V.L.P.); "Many Waters", Bedford", Bedford, 4 ♂, 5 ♀, 23/3/1975 (V.L.P.); "Huntly Glen", Bedford, 8 ♂, 1 ♀, 18/2/1978 (E. L. Pringle); "Huntly Glen", Bedford, 2 ♂, 1 ♀, 18/2/1978 (V.L.P.); "Huntly Glen", Bedford, 1 ♂, 2 ♀, 15/2/1978 (E.L.P.); "Huntly Glen", Bedford, 1 ♂, 15/2/1978 (V.L.P.); "Huntly Glen", Bedford, 1 ♂, 8/2/1976 (E.L.P.); "Huntly Glen", Bedford, 1 ♂, 28/3/1982 (E.L.P.); "Huntly Glen", Bedford, 1 ♀, 28/3/1982 (A. B. Pringle).

The Holotype and Allotype have been donated to the British Museum.

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A NEW LOCALITY FOR *STIGMELLA SAMIATELLA* (ZELLER). — Three plain brassy-coloured male Nepticulids with black heads and white collars and eye-caps, taken from a light-trap at Peasmarsh, E. Sussex on 17-21.vii.1983 could not be identified until a genitalia slide was made. Even then I failed to recognize the species, and sent a drawing to Professor C. Wilkinson of Amsterdam, who kindly sent me the good news that I had *Stigmella samiatella*. Emmet (1976, *Moths and butterflies of Great Britain and Ireland* 1 and 1981, *The smaller moths of Essex*) has recorded *S. samiatella* from Radnorshire and from both vice-counties of Essex. In the extreme east of Essex (VC 19) it is common but very local. These are the only British records, but surely the species must be overlooked elsewhere. — E. C. PELHAM-CLINTON, Furzeleigh House, Lyme Road, Axminster, Devon, EX13 5SW.

POLYPOGON STRIGILATA L. (LEP.: NOCTUIDAE): A FURTHER NOTE AND A CORRECTION. — After the interest shown in my paper on this species (vide *Ent. Rec.*, 95:238-241), I may add that the moth still occurs locally in East Sussex. I should also like to point out that my references to Berkshire should in fact refer to North Hampshire. — B. ELLIOTT, "Threepieces", Vernon Lane, Kelstedge, Derbyshire.